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APPENDIX VI.

[Vide answer to question No. 412 asked by Mr. C. Gopala Menon at the meeting of the Legislative Council held on the 5th March 1925, page 811 supra.]

Extracts from the Administration Report of the Director of Town-planning for the year 1924.

With the close of the year under review the Department will have been in existence for three years and as should be expected of a new department, the extent of its operation and output of work was very largely increased during the year. As the appointment of Director and establishment of the office was in the first place for a period of three years, whilst dealing with the work of the year, a general summary of the work accomplished since the establishment of the department, the present position and future prospects will be desirable.

2. A schedule of the schemes that have and are being dealt with by the department and are in prospect forms an annexure of this report. From this it will be seen that in all 41 schemes have been sanctioned under the Town-planning Act or otherwise approved, 97 schemes are in course of preparation and 171 more are under discussion or have been proposed. As an interesting comparison it may be remarked that only 15 schemes have yet been sanctioned under the English Town Planning Act although it has been in force for 15 years and that five years passed before a single scheme was sanctioned. All of these 309 schemes, except an insignificant minority, are in the 74 towns that have been visited up-to-date and it will be found that most of the other 225 municipalities and towns, with population of 5,000 and more, that have not yet been visited should have schemes prepared to the same extent. So the amount of work in prospect is tremendous.

3. Although the visible results of the work may not be as great as might be expected the actual facts indicate a very substantial amount of spade work which should result in a considerable number of Town-planning developments in the near future. The importance of Town-planning as a measure of economy has yet to be fully realized, the general excuse for not taking up schemes is 'the financial stringency'. In the meantime towns continue to grow, but upon the old insanitary, uncontrolled lines which result in ever recurring and heavy expenditure on combating plague, schemes for the 'removal of congestion', street widenings, and other non-productive and purely remedial measures, a large part of which has had to be borne by Government by Sanitary and Health grants. It takes a very few years only for a noxious slum area to grow up, e.g., Ponnagaram area, Madura, although only 10 years' old at the time was the subject of schemes for improvement which would have cost over a lakh of rupees if they had been carried out, and even three years' delay in the initiation of schemes may in some instances prove very costly, whilst the delay in bringing areas under the control by deferring the resolution under 9 (1) and publication under 10 (1) of the Madras Town Planning Act, 1920, has no doubt resulted in serious loss of betterment possibilities due to advancing prices in land.

4. It is found in practice that the whole of the work required in the preparation of schemes has been done by this department. Although the onus of preparation of schemes is thrown on municipal councils under the

Act, it is only natural that this should be the case. Even in England where municipal staffs may be considered to be much more highly trained, experts are frequently called in to prepare town-planning schemes and in this country where no experts are available, and municipal councils could not afford to employ them if they were it is unreasonable to expect municipal councils to prepare satisfactory schemes, so the department must be prepared to shoulder a major portion of the work.

5. *Madras City and Suburban Town-planning Trust.*—In addition to dealing with the abovementioned schemes the department has had to do all the technical work of the Trust, besides the preparation of the Trust's schemes. This has involved the security of over 250 building applications and in the majority of cases visits to the site. It has also involved regular attendance at the meetings of the Trust and its Committees on the part of the Director.

6. *Visits to mufassal towns.*—Forty-seven towns have been visited during the year making 74 towns during the three years, many of which have been visited two, three or more times. These visits have necessarily been of short duration as it is impossible to give the time required for more than a cursory inspection owing to the very large number of towns to be visited and the demands of the office and the work in Madras City. With the appointment of District Town-planning officers the difficulties in this respect would be lessened as the district officer would be able to devote sufficient time to each place visited to go into details.

7. *Survey.*—I have frequently had to report on the difficulty of preparing schemes owing to the entire lack of or out-of-dateness of the survey maps available. In a recent tour it was found that four out of the six towns were without surveys, two of the four being important and rapidly growing marketing and industrial centres where comprehensive Town-planning and Zoning schemes are of the utmost importance.

8 *Civic Survey.*—The supervision of the preparation of Civic Survey is another important piece of work which has been thrown upon this office. Not as much progress has been made as could have been hoped but the question has not been pressed as it has been found that owing to lack of surveys and of information asked for, municipalities are faced with difficulties in providing the necessary statistics. It has also been realized that the meaning of Civic Survey has been imperfectly understood and that in this matter much more assistance than is possible should be given to municipal councils. Under the circumstances it has been hoped, before pressing municipal councils to push on with these surveys, to circulate a sample survey. A comprehensive survey has been prepared for Vizagapatam, largely owing to the enthusiasm of one member of the municipal council, and it is hoped that this will be ready for circulation shortly. The importance of such a survey has been fully discussed in the Government Order and is generally recognised as a necessary preliminary to enlightened town-planning and particularly that branch of town-planning known as 'Zoning.' The survey is also very useful for purposes of general municipal administration, as a handy ready referencer particularly if it is kept up to date from time to time.

9. *Housing.*—A number of housing schemes have been prepared—South Mylapore, Lloyds Road, Palmyra Kuppam, Choolai, Rayapuram, Fisherman's village at Mylapore, Cochranes Canal area in Madras City; Kandal scheme, Ootacamund; Eucalyptus tope, Coonoor; Mill Labouring scheme,

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Tirpur; Industrial school staff, Madura, Vizagapatam municipal staff co-operative scheme, etc. The Corporation of Madras has budgeted for an expenditure of Rs. 4,57,000 for the provision of houses for workers for their schemes in the City and Ootacamund Council one lakh rupees for the Kandal scheme, whilst Tirpur and Coonoor have asked for loans during the forthcoming financial year.

10. The question of housing must inevitably come to the fore, as it has done in so many other countries and this side of the work of the office will of necessity increase considerably as it is recognized that such schemes should in many cases follow on or from integral parts of Town-Planning schemes. In the past schemes for the relief of congestion have been destructive rather than constructive and it is most important that construction should take place *pari passu* with destruction otherwise matters are only made worse by such relief schemes.

11. It is most desirable that large industrial concerns should realise the responsibility of good housing for their employees, as otherwise the development of an industry within a municipality may often be a hardship to the town, as the population at the lower and unremunerative end, looked at from the point of view of municipal finance, is increased sometimes out of proportion to the benefit accruing from the establishment of the industry, particularly where the management of the concern is of the absentee variety. Increase in population of this class often brings in its train considerable non-productive expenditure. Under the circumstances it is important that municipalities should as far as possible provide for the accommodation of its own sweepers and other low-paid municipal servants and so set an example that other large employers of labour can be asked to follow. No doubt the time will come when the provision of good housing will be recognized and enforced as an essential charge on industry. But until such time a wider voluntary adoption of this principle by industrial concerns would help to relieve municipal councils of one of their most onerous and pressing problems.

12. *Design of public buildings.*—The regulation of the character of buildings is provided for in the Town Planning Act and the need for such regulation has been realized very fully during inspections. . . The aesthetic side of town planning is so much bound up with the location and character of public buildings as it is in the public buildings that the town is able to express and assert itself without restriction. The need for advice and guidance on these questions may be illustrated by reference to the proposed New Municipal Office at Vizagapatam as in that case the plan was revised by me in such a way as to give it some distinctive architectural character, a development of the dominant local style, and at the same time the plinth area was reduced by 1,300 square feet without decreasing accommodation. Other minor matters, such as market and school buildings and house designs for poor classes have been dealt with, but the three years, owing to general financial stringency have not been prolific in the production of new buildings for public purposes.

13. *Town Planning Act.*—Experience in the working of the Town Planning Act has already brought to light the need for amendment and the Inspector of Municipal Councils and I are engaged on the consideration of proposals for amendments.

14. It is found that the procedure under the Act is unnecessarily prolonged and burdensome and it is most difficult to get municipal councils to comply with it; in fact, owing to the delays caused thereby I have advised

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in the case of several schemes that have been started under the Act that they should be sanctioned outside of the Act where there is little advantage in completing them under the Act. In other respects the Act is not sufficiently responsible to local conditions, whilst the need for wider application of section (8) has already been mentioned.

15. In this last respect it is important to differentiate if it is found possible between a general town plan and detailed plans of small areas. The general town plan is the important and urgent matter, which should be made compulsory on all towns, whilst the detailed plan is only necessary as and when actual developments for the areas in question are in prospect. The Act as it stands is difficult of application to comprehensive town-planning schemes owing to the amount of detail required to be incorporated in the scheme.

16. *Lectures and Publicity.*—About a dozen lectures have been given during the year in various centres and a number of articles have been written for the press. The lectures have been given to municipal and local boards conferences, municipal councils, and to public meetings, several of which were arranged by the Y.M.C.A. Much more could and should be done in this respect but it is extremely difficult to find the necessary time for such work. The meaning and purpose of town planning is often not understood even in responsible circles and much spade work has still to be done, particularly for the purpose of developing the local enthusiasm and co-operation that are so necessary as a prelude to the preparation of town-planning schemes. The need for diagrams and lantern slides is very great and with more time these could be prepared. Requests have been received for slides and diagrams bearing on the subject but it has not been possible to respond to them. Lack of town planning and housing is the root cause of so much that is evil in urban existence that the necessity of public propaganda cannot be over emphasised.

The total number.

		Under T.P. Act.		Outside the T.P. Act.		Total.	
1. Submitted to Government.	Sanctioned	5	16	19	25	24	41
	Not sanctioned	11		6		17	
2. In preparation		59		38		97	
3. In contemplation		106		65		171	
Total		181		128		309	